

Review

By Associate Professor Elena Borisova Tarasheva, PhD, New Bulgarian University, Associate Professor in Research Field 2.1 Philology, Discourse Analysis (Media), for the acquisition of the academic degree "Doctor" in the Research Field 2.1. Philology by the candidate Lina Miloshevska

Significance of the problem under investigation in theoretical and applied terms.

The candidate explores the influx of foreign words from English into the media language of a popular publication in North Macedonia, the magazine Kapital. She tracks the way they gain acceptance and popularity in subsequent issues of the magazine. For this purpose, she creates corpora of the numbers of the magazine for two years with a big gap between them – 2000 and 2020. Then she annotates manually and with the help of a computerized tagging program, lemmatizes the vocabulary, and establishes the frequencies of the relevant lexical units – raw and calibrated, and then analyses quantitative and qualitative data on the use and distribution of English borrowings in the corpora from the years 2000 and 2020.

Creating good corpora contributes in several important ways to lexicography. Furthermore, mastering techniques for corpus building provides a special competence for linguists wishing to develop aptitude for language issues. At present, a range of different products exist for natural language processing. Getting to know the specifics of several different products and making the right choice of a tool for research is, therefore, an excellent research experience which helps PhD students navigate the field of corpus linguistics and its tools.

Describing the frequency, paradigms and functioning of loanwords is a task befitting aspiring young linguists, especially those with an interest in lexicography. In the end, Miloshevska's research produces valuable frequency lists of Anglicisms, which are widely used in areas such as teaching, standardization, the creation of dictionaries and language reference books.

Precision of formulating goals and objectives for the dissertation.

The goal is formulated by the PhD student as follows: "The primary aim of this study is to investigate the numerical impact of anglicisms in Macedonian media texts and to explore their diachronic evolution between 2000 and 2020". Insofar as the corpus includes one medium – Kapital, the corpora created for the study form insufficient basis to make such a broad generalization. Even less possible is the answer to the question whether the number of anglicisms in Macedonian has been increasing over the years of the study, due to lack of representative data. Good judgment is shown in taking a positive attitude towards loan words – the candidate adopts a stance that they enrich the language, involve the community



in joint tends in the region and the world and are ultimately a positive feature of language development, not an undesirable trend.

Evidence that the dissertation was developed independently and does not literally repeat the topic and a significant part of the content of other works submitted for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".¹

There is no doubt about the originality of the research. It is evident that the data were obtained through the independent, scrupulous and authentic work of the candidate. Although the criterion is required for a higher educational and academic degree, the candidate meets this requirement, which is another merit of the work worth noting.

Awareness of the state of art concerning the problem and relevance of the literature used.

The PhD student cites a large number of local researchers from North Macedonia, although she states from the very beginning that the borrowings from English have not been sufficiently researched in her country. Particularly recurring is the claim that so far Macedonian researchers have never used corpora to illuminate the issue of English-language borrowings to the current state of the language variety. The fact that none of the existing language corpora from North Macedonia has been used – at least as a reference source for calculating normalised parameters, is a weakness of the research. While building media corpora presents a positive contribution of the PhD student, the neglect of corpora created by other researchers is a definite drawback.

The extensive list of the cited literature includes almost all the main authors who have contributed to the development of corpus linguistics. Considerably fewer are the lexicographers who study the stock of a language with its components and its codification, probably due to problems around the status of the language itself.

As a whole, the PhD student has become acquainted with the state of play in corpus linguistics and the tasks that can be achieved through it. On the other hand, purely lexicographic and sociolinguistic issues remain underrepresented in the main bulk of the research, due to the focus on one media title with its specific readership.

Adequate referencing and sufficient number of the authors cited in the work.

Of the 178 cited texts, 64 were written after the year 2000. Therefore, mostly up-to-date and recent texts on the topic have been engaged with as the theoretical background. Basic texts from the nineties of the last century, such as books and articles by Sinclair, McEnery, Reppen, Stubbs and others, have not avoided the attention of the candidate either. The referencing techniques in the text are correctly applied

¹ It refers to the academic degree of "Doctor of Arts".



and help to easily find the quoted works. Among the positives of the research is that there are no indirect citations. On the negative side, no Bulgarian authors have been quoted, including the supervisor.

A sound and sustainable theoretical framework of the research.

The theoretical model of the study, in effect, involves a comparison of the number of foreign words in the two corpora of the journal *Kapital* for two years: 2000 and 2020. A larger number is found in the second corpus, which lead to a conclusion that more words are borrowed from English. Additionally, the evolved patterns of adopting loan words are analysed in terms of a qualitative analysis. Given the limited representativeness of both corpora, the quantitative data and conclusions hold no value beyond the specific journal. Nevertheless, the conscientious and diligent work of compiling and annotating the corpora is valuable and contributes to the development of skills and knowledge of the language material by the PhD student.

Adequacy of the selected methodology and applicability to the set goal and objectives of the dissertation.

There is little warrant to draw conclusions about the influence of large amounts of borrowings from English vocabulary on the language of Macedonians, nor on the language of the media in North Macedonia. The corpora do not have sufficient representativeness for these purposes. Such a goal can be achieved by including in the corpora numerous and diverse publications, with varying degrees of openness to borrowed vocabulary, in different media forms, and with different types of audiences. However, compiling frequency lists of borrowings from the English language, examining the lemmas of each of them, tracing their use in syntactic constructions is a sufficiently consistently accomplished task by the candidate and her supervisor. The work lends credibility to a PhD effort on the part of the doctoral student and provides material for mastering language skills and analysing speech material.

Input in data collection and analysis.

Beyond any doubt, all the activities for data collection and analysis have been performed by the PhD student herself with the guidance of the supervisor. Nothing suggests plagiarism of independent data processing. The specifics of the corpora and the way the results are presented reveal conscientious work and stringent following of the procedure.

Evaluation of the contributions:

1. Brief description of the nature and assessment of the credibility of the material on which the contributions of the dissertation are built.

Compiling corpora from the *Kapital* issues is a worthwhile effort for a linguist – formatting the texts, clearing unnecessary data, defining the initial parameters of the vocabulary, etc. are all laborious, but extremely important and specific work that can only be done on the basis of extensive



knowledge and persistent application. The use of Lawrence Anthony's annotation program for the parts of speech requires good language knowledge and focussed work on the part of the candidate, which she handled successfully. The creation of frequency lists requires knowledge of statistical parameters related to language processing. The PhD student demonstrates good orientation and has managed to compile comprehensible data. Working with reference sources for annotating the language material has undoubtedly enriched her knowledge of the linguistic layers and the composition of written text.

Description of the applicant's contributions and evaluation of the results.

- a) The dissertation shows that the candidate has in-depth theoretical awareness of corpus linguistics: knowledge and skills to compile, annotate and analyse corpora. The actual research she has conducted reveals willingness to experiment with different methodologies, and taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of each of the methods used, to develop the ability to research independently and with confidence.
- b) The dissertation does not contain theoretical generalizations and solutions to scientific or applied research problems that represent an original contribution to science, but this is a requirement for the next academic and educational degree, which the PhD student has not yet reached.

Assessment of the degree of personal engagement of the PhD candidate to the contributions.

The work warrants no grounds for doubt about the independence of the work, nor about the originality of the data. Corpora always present a very specific picture of the domain under scrutiny. In the case of Miloshevska's study, no repetition of existing studies can be seen.

Assessment of the correspondence of the condensed presentation with the main points and contributions of the whole dissertation.

The abstract is competently developed and follows the structure of the dissertation. It highlights the important points in a synthesized form. It is easy to read, no details are omitted or added.

Impact of the dissertation on the environment.

1. Assessment of the publications based on the research:

Two publications on the topic are presented for consideration of the candidate's performance in their course of PhD study: one is in the journal of the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures *English Studies at NBU*, refereed in the Scopus database. The second is in the collection of doctoral students' works from the national philological forum at the South-West University in Blagoevgrad. Thus, the two publications bring the necessary number of points to apply for the award of the academic and educational degree of Doctor.



Certificates of attendance in the readings in Blagoevgrad, as well as in a Bulgarian Studies Conference for PhD students at Sofia University, are presented. The PhD student has also participated in the International Conference on Applied Linguistics in Belgrade and the International Conference in Blagoevgrad on the History and Current State of Linguistics.

The two publications in academic journals present different aspects of the work on the dissertation. The one in ESNBU describes the methodology for extracting anglicisms from a corpus, while the collection of SWU reflects on the mechanisms for acceptance and development of foreign borrowings in the language.

Participation in international conferences demonstrates confidence and desire to share experience and knowledge with other PhD students, but also to go beyond the doctoral student's level and enter into communication with established scientists.

2. Quotes and adoption by other authors, reviews in the scientific press, etc.

There is no evidence of citation of the texts of the PhD student.

Conclusion

The doctoral student has carried out serious research for the preparation of the dissertation. She has:

- identified and read a huge volume of literature;
- experimented with various types of language-processing programmes;
- compiled corpora;
- derived qualitative and quantitative data;
- discussed her data;
- summarized her findings.

Her publications provide the necessary number of points for awarding the scientific and educational degree of Doctor.

Date:

Signature :